At Taranto, a swarm of customs and police officers appeared on the deck. Passengers were again lined up for inspection of papers. We stood at the railing and were watching the crowd on the pier when two limousines with Italian flags appeared at the shore. Our major turned to the head of our mission: "Those are for you and your party, Your Excellency."

As guests of the Italian government, we were not subject to inspection, and as we descended the gangway we were followed by the respectful glances of the first-class passengers. Our reputation had been restored.

THE EUROPEAN SCENE

After a year in Italy, our work for Georgia took us to France, Great Britain, Switzerland, and Germany. We helped the Georgian missions in these countries in establishing contacts with the press, organizing information services, preparing memoranda, and so forth. Essentially, this was journalistic work that had to be kept on a high professional level to offset the fundamental difficulties—we represented a small country actually unknown in Europe and had to defend it against formidable Soviet propaganda.

Often our work was frustrating, but it provided us with an insight into local political life and brought us into contact with many persons who played prominent roles on the political stage of postwar Europe. I do not know whether it was pure chance, but the statesmen who impressed me most belonged to the older generation, already at the decline of their political careers.

Our work for Georgia ended in 1922 after the little republic was overrun and conquered by the U.S.S.R. Then we settled in Germany. There, under the Weimar Republic, we took an active part in local politics. This was another desperate fight for a lost cause. Once again I had to learn that the worst enemy of democracy is democracy itself, with its lack of unity, nearsightedness, and inability to act at the decisive moment.

Apart from this spell of political activity, we were spectators of the historical drama of Europe rather than actors and, in contrast to the hectic days and nights in the Tauride Palace, we had plenty of time to meditate on the meaning of unfolding events.

Europe was emerging from the nightmare of the war that had ended her political and economic hegemony in the world. Three empires—German, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman—had been wiped off the map. The Russian Empire had raised the banner of world revolution. The foundations of the British Empire were cracking. The League of